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# Amateur Home Decoration.

Edward Dewey, del.

## IMPORTANT NOTICE.

Subscribers who are either building new houses or are contemplating re-decorating their present homes, are invited to write us for information regarding color harmony and artistic schemes of furnishing. We employ trained skill to solve all questions of interior decoration.

In compliance with the wishes of many of our correspondents to purchase housefurnishing goods in New York, we notify our readers that we have organized a Purchasing Department, and are prepared to purchase goods at prices quoted, without making any charge therefor. We strongly advise those who write to us for decorative color schemes to carefully consider our advice, with the samples of the various materials in hand, which we invariably send with each

reply, so that their minds will be fully made up when they ask us to Purchase the goods, and know that every item of their order is the result of a definite decision. It is impossible to exchange goods after the materials have been cut and shipped, and we hope, in all cases, that the goods as ordered, when sent will be accepted and paid for.

Correspondents when writing us are particularly requested to embody a reply to the following points in their letters:

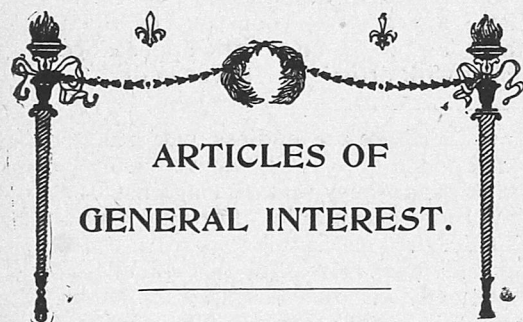
1. Write legibly and on one side of the paper.
2. Send copy of architect's plan or a rough sketch of the plan of the house, showing size, height and arrangement of rooms, with the north and south aspects clearly indicated.

3. Give particulars of existing woodwork, mentioning the nature of the trim, floor, cornice, picture-moldings and mantel in each room; state what must be retained, and what, if any, specified articles of furniture are desired.

4. State separately the maximum outlay permissible for wall treatments, ceiling decoration (if any), textile hangings, carpets and furniture.

5. Send brief notes of the house, its location, age and environment, and such particulars of the owner's tastes and sentiments bearing upon the matter as would be discovered from a personal interview.

6. Send ten two-cent stamps if samples of paper, carpets, draperies, etc. are desired by mail, otherwise we must express same at inquirer's expense.



## ARTICLES OF GENERAL INTEREST.

### ANENT THE TEACUP.

THE delicate cup from which we drink our tea or coffee is the youngest member of the ceramic family, and the ancient Greek cyanthus is probably its ancestor. Although the cyanthus had a single handle it was not so much used to drink from as the pitcher. Even after tea was introduced into Europe and had come into general use teacups were scarce. At the same time coffee was introduced, but apart from Constantinople the first coffee cups in Europe date back only as far as 1645 in Venice, 1659 in Paris, 1652 in London and 1694 in Leipsic. From the first, however, the conventional Oriental coffee cup, without stem or handle, was little used, and in Germany not at all. The Chinese teacup was used for tea, coffee and chocolate as well. Specimens of porcelain were undoubtedly introduced into Europe in the middle ages, yet not till the sixteenth century were cups imported from China in any great quantities, and even then it was as articles of vertu.

### CHINESE INGENUITY.

THE skill displayed by the Chinese in carving ivory balls within each other has excited the wonder and admiration of Europeans. Nothing can afford a greater proof of patience and perseverance, as well as of the taste of a Chinese handicraftsman, than one of these elegant baubles, each ball being exquisitely carved, and no two alike in pattern. Each of these balls rolls freely within that which incloses it, and is visible through apertures; so that however many there may be, the beauties of each can be examined and the number of the whole counted. Much time is spent upon the carving of these toys, for the cleverest artist will employ a whole month in the execution of each separate ball; consequently the labor of two years is not unfrequently bestowed on the production of a single toy, which is formed out of a solid globe of ivory, and has no junction in any part. The outside of this globe is first carved in some very open pattern, and is then carefully cut with a fine sharp instrument through the openings until a complete coating is detached from the solid part inside, as the peel of an orange might be loosened with a scoop from the fruit without being taken off. One hollow ball is thus formed, with a solid one inside of it. The surface of the inner ball is then carved through the interstices of the outer one, and, when finished, is subjected to the same operation as the first, and thus a second hollow ball is produced, still with a solid one of smaller dimensions inside. This process is repeated again and again, the difficulties increasing as the work proceeds, till at length only a small ball of the size of

a marble is left in the centre, which is also ornamented with figures cut upon it, and then the ingenious but useless bauble is complete. This process is said to be performed under water.



SUGGESTION FOR A PAINTED OR BURNT-WOOD PANEL.

### POTTERY AND GLASS OF THE CAVE DWELLERS.

**A**MONG some relics recently found about sixty miles from Thompson Springs, Utah, by Edward Turner, of Telluride, Col., broken pottery was very plentiful and covered the floor of the cave-house. Some of it was very beautifully enameled in the grotesque and fanciful manner that is characteristic of the cliff dwellers. Mr. Turner will endeavor to restore some of the pottery, though it will entail a great amount of labor. The material used was some sort of refined clay, and it is very hard; and it is only conjectural as to what composes the glittering enamel. Rummaging further into the recesses of the room, the fireplace was encountered. A white, fleecy substance was seen protruding from the fine ashes. It was pulled out and was found to resemble a mass of woolen strings. It had been used as a stopper to a large earthen vessel, perfect in condition and of native workmanship. Scraping aside the ashes, the vessel was lifted out and its contents deposited on the floor of the cavern. But the most valuable find in the jar was a string of black and red beads about sixteen feet long. The beads were of different lengths, but all of the same size in circumference. The material of which they were manufactured is as brittle as glass and shines like ebony. After a careful comparison of the beads with the enamel on the outside of the pottery, the writer is convinced that they are of one and the same material. The method of their manufacture can only be guessed at, though taking into consideration the crude means at command of the natives, it is barely possible that the clay or substance of which they were made was rolled around a string or grass stem and cut to the desired lengths and was then dried in that state until it became hard and of the consistency of glass.

**C**USHIONS for piazza or garden seats are better when made of dark linen or goods that will wash, making for these places a fresh cover weekly.

**A**MONG the pretty decorations for a company luncheon is an ice bouquet. Place in the middle of the table a good-sized square dish and in it a big piece of ice. Over this place roses, carnations, mignonette and trailing vines of smilax. Around the edge can be green boutonnières for all the guests, and the whole dish set in a mound of green. The same idea can be carried out in field flowers or any summer vines which can be gathered up by the wayside.

### BICYCLE CHAIN LUBRICATION.

**T**HE ideal lubricant should not only lubricate the chain and sprockets, but the pivots or pins holding the links of the chain also. Lubricants made from Pure Flake Graphite are superior to any other, when properly made. An article combining a perfect lubricant and rust preventive, put up in convenient form, is something desired by every bicyclist. To all such, Dixon's *Graphitoleo* will be not only welcome, but indispensable.

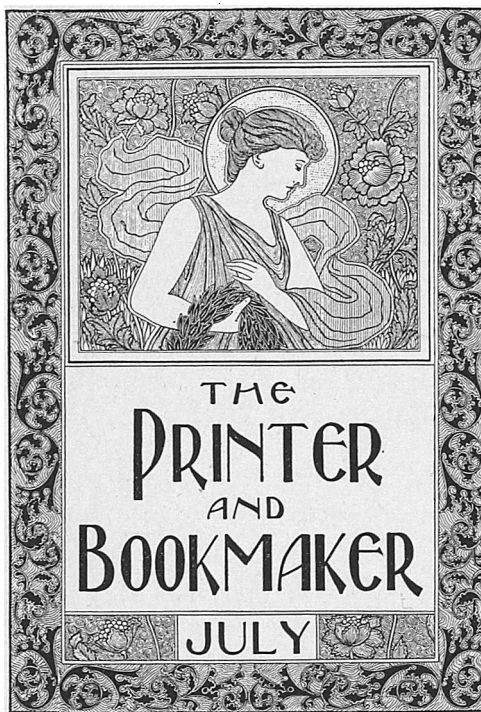
Dixon's *Graphitoleo* is a preparation of a very choice graphite finely pulverized, and a pure petrolatum warranted not to gum or become rancid. It is put up in collapsible tubes and is manufactured only by JOSEPH DIXON CRUCIBLE CO., Jersey City, N. J.

**I**N HANGING a hammock under a tree the quiet tone should be the one preferred. It attracts but little attention, while those in orange and brick red stand out and give for the place a too showy appearance.

**T**HE wild asparagus is a beautiful plant, much used in summer for open fire-places, the dressing of hall mantel shelves and odd corners in wide open spaces.

### TO HARDEN PLASTER FOR CASTS.

**T**O A thin milk of lime or limewater add ten or fifteen drops of liquid silicate of soda for every pint of fluid used; then thicken with plaster to a thick cream. Plaster thus prepared will set in five minutes or thereabouts, according to the thickness of the cream. If too much silicate is used, the soda will effloresce on the surface and spoil the sharpness of the impression.



MAGAZINE COVER. DESIGNED BY P. A. SCHWARZENBACH.

### A BOOK COVER, BY P. A. SCHWARZENBACH.

**T**HE AMERICAN PRINTER AND BOOKMAKER cover, shown herewith, is one of a series designed and drawn by Mr. Schwarzenbach, and does the designer credit, as it is strongly decorative and artistic, and while it is simple in composition, its very simplicity is a strong point in its favor. There is just enough snap about the design to bring it within the scope of the modern craze in such schemes, without touching upon the extreme element so apparent in many such efforts of the present day.

### TO MEND CHINA OR GLASS.

**F**INE CHINA or colored glass may be neatly mended by painting the edges with the white of an egg slightly beaten, dipping the edge in finely powdered unslacked lime, and quickly pressing the edges together and holding firmly for a few minutes. The lime will slacken and harden very quickly.

### STAINS.

**ON MARBLE.**—If the iron stain is recent, the stain should come off with oxalic acid and water. As soon as the stain is gone, swill the marble with water to remove all traces of the acid, which might damage the polish. If the polish has suffered at all, rub the marble with putty powder (oxide of tin) and water, or else with wet chalk and a leather. It is hardly necessary, perhaps, to say that oxalic acid and putty powder are both poisons.

**ON FLOOR.**—If the floor is parquetted in oak after the foreign fashion and polished with beeswax, as is most usual, the removal of a fresh ink stain presents no difficulty. It will disappear on being wiped with a wet flannel. If the stain is old, salts of lemon or spirits of salt must be applied, and the affected part should then be repolished with beeswax. To remove spots from carpets and tablecloths, a similar application is necessary; but it is often injurious to the material, and must in all cases be used very carefully and according to the exact instructions given by the chemist.

**T**O the woman who has money, there is always something new and enticing seen, ready to be purchased. In this season of blossoms the artist has a chance in the sketching of flower schemes that, if well treated, will find a ready market. In fact, the apple blossom has never had a great showing. What a find for calendars, trifles in water colors, tapestries for doors, and what a device for a wall paper.

Salons look well in mauve, pale yellow and white and gold. Boudoirs are beautiful in pale blue. Dining-rooms, when fitted up in rich greens, are especially inviting. For libraries, red is excellent as a tone; bedrooms can be equipped in any color, taking care that the furnishings correspond.

### SCRAPED PLAQUES.

**A** NEW device for decorating, or rather utilizing, the pressed wooden plaques now adapted to so many purposes, has been introduced of late. Making the natural grain of the wood serve for the lights and shades, a very fair landscape or marine view can be made by scraping the wood away in places, so that when held up to the light the effect of a transparency is obtained. The usual practice is to draw a horizontal line through the centre of the plate, and then scrape the back of the plate above the line, leaving the part below untouched. A deep puncture made here and there answers for a moon and headland lights, and a moonlight night at sea is really very well imitated if to heighten the effect a sail be painted in black upon the plate just below the line of the horizon.

### SKATES MADE OF GLASS.

**S**KATES are now made of glass hardened to the consistency of steel. Among the advantages claimed for glass skates are superior slipping or running qualities, a sharpness which cannot be dulled, and an ability to run equally well on smooth or rough ice.

**I**F A pillow is made then it is finished off by a deep ruffle, if a table cover a deep scallop is added, or if a pillow rest a ribbon is called into play. Pillows will never be out of fashion and the newer the design, the better the plan.